News Releases - 2007

Canada Council welcomes extension of budget increase

Ottawa, July 20, 2007 – The Canada Council for the Arts has described as "wonderful news" the federal government's announcement that a $30 million funding increase for 2007-08, which was originally included in the May 2006 federal budget, will now be ongoing.

The Honourable Bev Oda, Minister of Canadian Heritage, announced today in Toronto that the Canada Council will continue to receive the additional $30 million, bringing the total funding it receives from Parliament to more than $180 million a year.

The May 2006 federal budget included a two-year increase to the Council's funding amounting to $50 million: $20 million in 2006-07 and $30 million in 2007-08. However, the additional funds were not guaranteed to continue into the future, until Minister Oda's announcement today.

Canada Council Director Robert Sirman was delighted with the Minister's announcement. "This is wonderful news, not only for the Canada Council and the arts community, but for all Canadians whose lives are touched by the arts," he said. "It will allow us to plan for the future, with a view to strengthening the capacity of artists and arts organizations to contribute to the lives of Canadians and the communities where they live."

Mr. Sirman said the timing of the announcement is ideal because the Council is in the process of developing a strategic plan which will guide its priorities and activities from 2008 to 2011. The Council recently completed a series of consultations aimed at seeking input to the plan, including an on-line survey which attracted more than 1,400 responses.

"Until now, we faced the difficult challenge of making plans without knowing what financial resources would be available to us," he said. "Now, we can move ahead boldly, knowing that the additional funding is secure for the future."

Mr. Sirman said that details about how the additional funds will be allocated will be included in the Council's corporate plan for 2008-2011.

"The strategic plan, which we expect to announce in the fall, will be a statement of principles and priorities that will guide the allocation of the new funds. This will be followed in March 2008 by the corporate plan, which will translate those principles and priorities into concrete actions."

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